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We are not disposed to take much stock in the flying reports which depict Senator Joseph Benson Foraker of Ohio as standing over the prostrate form of the Hon. Marcus A. Hanna and preparing to insert a dirk. It is our guess that these two distinguished Buckeyes understand each other much better than is commonly supposed.

What the Trouble Is.

The present administration has made repeated complaint of the unreliability of many of the news dispatches sent out from Washington in relation to state department affairs. It probably is true that less reliance can be placed upon this class of news than upon any other class in contemporary print. The wires day after day are kept hot with fakes and the pressmen fairly groan with subsequent explanations, qualifications and corrections. And why? Because an epidemic of lying has suddenly befallen the occupants of the capital's Newspaper Row?

Not a bit of it. The average of conscience and character among the newspaper correspondents at Washington was never higher than it is today. At no prior time could more dependence be placed by a public official in the fact that an injunction to secrecy laid upon a representative of the respectable press would be remembered and obeyed. Nor has there ever been a time when the representation of the newspaper profession collected within reach of the legislative and executive officials of the government has been more willing to convey the truth from those in authority to the people at large. The fault is not primarily with the correspondents, for like the western fiddler they are doing the best they can.

The whole trouble is that during the reign of Mr. Cleveland the customary avenues of information have been closed to the news; there has been an effort to invest every official act, thought and circumstance with an air of profound reverence and mystery, and respectful inquiry in the name of the public has almost without exception met with contemptuous rebuff. We of course refer especially to subjects under the heading of foreign affairs. The evils just enumerated have been less prominent in those departments of the federal government under the management of men older and wiser in official experience, yet all the way through the list the Cleveland-Obley example of contemptuousness for legitimate public curiosity has been effective for evil. Newspaper correspondents, deprived of official confidence have had to piece current reports together, now and then using inference, when they should have had facts; and the net effect has been to present the state department to the public as a thing of almost kaleidoscopic fickleness of purpose.

We hope and trust that the administration of William McKinley will pursue a radically different policy in this respect. We know that Major McKinley himself has for years been famous for his uniform tact and courtesy in intercourse with newspaper men; and we believe that Secretary of State John Sherman will also recognize where the Obley order can be materially improved without any necessary sacrifice of official dignity or propriety.

Facts About Cuba.

A timely report has been made by Consul Hyatt, our representative at Santiago de Cuba, to the state department. It is a description of some of the natural resources of Cuba. Some of the facts in it are new to many persons.

Cuba, we learn from it, is about the size though not the shape of Pennsylvania. It is 775 miles long, and from 30 to 160 miles wide. "Although founded and settled more than fifty years before the United States, Cuba," says the consul, "has still 13,000,000 acres of prime forests where the woodman's axe has never been heard. These forests are timbered, besides other woods, with mahogany, cedar, logwood, ebony, gum vitae and caiguaran, the latter being more durable in the ground than iron or steel. The soil is a marvel of richness, and fertilizers of any kind are seldom used unless in the case of tobacco, even though the same crop be grown in the same field for a hundred years, as has already happened in some of the sugar cane fields. The mountains are of coral formation, while the lowlands of Eastern Cuba, at least, seem to be composed largely of fossils of sea matter from prehistoric times, and are extremely rich in lime phosphate, which accounts for their apparent inexhaustibility."

After describing the almost incredible sugar and tobacco crops, Consul Hyatt takes up the mineral wealth. He says copper was mined at Cobre by the natives before Columbus discovered the island, and there is strong proof that native copper was carried across to Florida and used by the Indians there hundreds of years ago. The books of the consulate show that, from 1828 to 1850, annual shipments of copper ore to the United States averaged from \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000. Iron overshadows all other industries of Eastern Cuba and constitutes "the only industry that has made any pretence of standing up against the shock of the present insurrection. These mines continue to ship from 20,000 to 50,000 tons of ore to the United States every month, the largest portion of which is used at Bethlehem, Steelton and Pittsburg, and at Sparrows Point, Md. American capital recently opened a manganese mine about twenty miles from Santiago and built

a railroad to carry the ore, but, after shipping one cargo, the business was closed up by the insurgents. In Consul Hyatt's opinion this will prove a valuable industry as soon as peace is restored.

The case in brief is that Cuba, for its size, is the most valuable bit of territory on the globe. That Spain does not wish to part with it is natural. It is just as natural that Americans should not wish to see so valuable a property abused.

The next secretary of the treasury cannot be a better man than Shelby M. Cullom.

Philadelphia Liquor Laws.

The Philadelphia Ledger prints an abstract of a paper which President Elliot of Harvard university is to contribute to the February Atlantic Monthly upon "American Liquor Laws." The paper digests the results of the investigations of a committee of sociologists who four years ago undertook to make a comprehensive study of the liquor problem in the United States. The committee reviewed exhaustively the workings of the liquor legislation of eight representative states, including Pennsylvania, and President Elliot in turn condensed and edited its work into shape suitable for public print. In what follows we avail ourselves liberally of the Ledger's abstract.

The first point deduced by President Elliot from the committee's investigations is that licenses should not be granted for longer than one year. The limitation of licenses as to population has worked favorably in Massachusetts, reducing the number of saloons, and making the license-holders more observant of the law; but the writer remarks that the evidence does not warrant the statement that such limitations would work as well in every locality. In Massachusetts one license is permitted to every 1000 of population, and in Boston one to every 500. He recommends the Missouri restriction, prohibiting the location of a licensed house within 500 feet of a public park, and the Massachusetts law providing that no license shall be given to a house within 400 feet of a school-house.

What body shall constitute the licensing authority is a query to which President Elliot devotes much space. It appears that county courts are the common licensing authorities in the states to which the investigation was applied. A recent Massachusetts law provides that three commissioners shall be appointed by the mayor, each commissioner to serve six years, one retiring every second year. This arrangement, President Elliot remarks, provides "a tolerably stable and independent board, without violating the principle of local self-government." One point strenuously insisted upon is that the licensing authority should have the power to revoke or withhold a license, "no matter how complete may be the compliance of the applicant with the preliminary conditions."

As to the impropriety of investing the courts with the power to grant licenses the writer speaks in no uncertain terms. He writes: "The objections to using courts as licensing authorities are grave. In cities licenses are large money prizes, and whoever awards many of them year after year is more liable to the suspicion of yielding to improper influences than judges ordinarily are in the discharge of strictly judicial duties. Whenever the judgeships are elective offices it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that they have given pledges to the liquor interest. Since judicial purity and reputation for purity are much more important than discreet and fair licensing, it would be wiser not to use courts as licensing authorities."

It has been the experience that wholesale dealers, by signing the bonds of retailers, secure control of the latter. This has been controlled in certain states, among them Pennsylvania, by preventing those engaged in the manufacture of liquors from becoming bondsmen. President Elliot suggests that the appearance of the names of office-holders and politicians on numerous license bonds, may be prevented by prohibiting the holders of elective office from acting as bondsmen in such cases. President Elliot seems to prefer the Ohio system, which has no licensing authorities. Licensing is prohibited by the Ohio constitution; but when any one chooses to sell liquor he must pay a tax of \$20 and give bond conditioned upon the observance of certain restrictions. While the tax is much too low, in his opinion, the plan, he says, "prevents in some measure the evil effects of liquor legislation on politics. There are grave inherent objections to the whole license system when resting on the discretion of commissioners, which the experience of these eight states cannot be said to remove. No other element connected with a license does so much to throw the liquor traffic into politics. It compels the traffic to be in politics for self-protection. It makes of every licensing board a powerful political engine. A tax law avoids this result, and is so far an improvement. The Ohio law is a case in point."

We do not see why the law should practice discrimination as to persons in designating whom may sell intoxicants, provided its general conditions are obeyed. In other words, all applicants should succeed who can pay the price and sustain the collateral responsibilities. That would clearly be the fair course to pursue.

Assuming that the Republicans elect senators in Oregon and Kentucky and that the Delaware vacancy is not filled, the next senate will stand: Republicans, 4; Democrats, 23; Fusionists, 12. If Kenney, the Democratic member-elect from Delaware, is seated, the Republicans will be two votes short of strength enough to control the senate by aid of the deciding ballot of the vice-president. It will be perceived, therefore, that to be a senator these days means something.

If our memory is not at fault, the esteemed Wilkes-Barre Record not long ago twitted Scranton for failing to accord a fitting reception to the pianist Sleveking and the baritone Bigham. It is therefore with amazement that we now read the conspicuous assertion in its editorial columns that "a hamlet of 1,000 inhabitants unaccustomed to anything better in art than the conventional school entertainment is en-

gulfed in no greater degree of darkness than Wilkes-Barre this winter. Every artistic aspiration that the city was wont to have is paralyzed. The whole subject of music, in a broad way, seems to be dead and forgotten." Wilkes-Barre has our sympathy.

According to an official publication just issued at Ottawa, the net debt of the Dominion of Canada on June 30, 1896, was \$258,496,000. With a population of 5,000,000 this means a per capita indebtedness of over \$50 or an indebtedness for each family of more than \$250. We think this simple bit of mathematics abundantly answers the question, Do we want to annex Canada?

In the course of his career in the prize ring John L. Sullivan won nearly \$400,000 in purses, not to mention his exhibition earnings. Yet this is all gone, Sullivan is penniless and practically friendless and few persons nowadays waste time on his memory. The circumstance vividly illustrates the transience of lawless notoriety.

If any New Yorker is to enter the cabinet, the choice might well fall on ex-Senator Fassett. It was Fassett's blood, shed in '91, which fertilized the subsequent Republican victories in that state and thereby made it possible for Mr. Platt to re-enter the United States senate. Moreover he is personally worthy of cabinet honors.

If Senator Cameron wishes to represent this government at a European capital after March 4, he would undoubtedly be a good man to wear such an honor with discretion, social tact and diplomatic effectiveness. Now that he is to retire from the senate, let him have justice.

Senator-elect Platt is to be tendered a great dinner on Jan. 28, on which occasion he is expected to announce his formal acceptance of the toga which has been thrust upon him. But it will not be a Beshazzar's Feast, for the senatorship will long ere that time have been buttoned up.

Announcement is made that the Carnegie company has opened offices in London and Liverpool, and intends to bid against British steel makers in their own markets. If that be true, the Carnegie company will probably not again ask for tariff protection at Washington.

King Oscar of Sweden is greatly pleased to be named as the final arbiter between England and the United States. It undoubtedly is a fine compliment, and it is to be hoped the king will prove worthy of it.

Let us sincerely hope that the present Pennsylvania legislature will have the courage of its good intentions.

REDEEM THE PLEDGES.

From the Philadelphia Times. The time has come when there must be the absolute separation of both official power and money from political control in both city and state. It can be done only by the enactment of such laws as will make the man who attempts to do his political job corruptly, and in the penitentiary, and the laws should be so complete in their provisions as to bring within its penalties not only the subordinate who uses money corruptly, but the principals who furnish it. The man who uses corruption funds in politics is usually a hired criminal, and morally responsible for this debauchery and demoralization are those who furnish the money for their own advancement. This corrupt use of money in politics must end.

It is not only the right, but it is the duty of prominent men in both public and private life, to exert their influence wisely and honestly to attain political ends; but when such men attempt to secure following by the promise of official position, or by the use of money even under the latitudinous specification of legitimate expenses, they should be called to account for debauchery of our political system and striking at the very fountain of free government. There are legitimate expenses in politics which every intelligent citizen should understand, but which few political leaders of the present day respect. Any contribution of money to a political candidate that involves an "expressed or implied promise" to serve the personal ends of the giver, is just as corrupt as the direct purchase of a vote of a legislator and should be so treated by the laws; and every municipal official should be prohibited from making political contributions, voluntarily or otherwise, under penalty of being dismissed from official place.

The state treasury has long been a source of political power and demoralization. Its funds are used largely as a corruption fund by making deposits where they will do the most good for those who happen to have the right political connections, and all this debauchery by providing that the surplus in the treasury shall be placed at interest in responsible banking depositories to be indicated by some competent authority. Under such a law there would be no temptation on the part of any political control of the treasury to endanger the safety of the public funds in the interest of politics.

The time is here when the solemn pledge given the people of Pennsylvania for thorough, radical reform by the exclusion of money and official power from politics, must be fulfilled. Let it be done promptly and completely.

THE CRY OF "BUSINESS"

From the Washington Post. A notable but not a pleasant feature of latter-day discussion of governmental policy, especially with reference to foreign nations, is the frequency and the urgency with which "business" is presented as the great end and determining consideration. When the president took his Venezuelan proclamation every stock exchange in the country, every speculator, pawnbroker, and money changer, cried out in horror and alarm. It was going to ruin business, forsooth! Much better let Venezuela be cheated, bullied, and enfolded out of her property, much better connive at the desertion of the Monroe doctrine, much better accept national dishonor and disgrace, than rattle the smallest feather on the wings of "business." The same cry has been raised in the Cuban affair. It will never do to interfere or even protest against the carnival of barbarism now raging in that unhappy island. Let the hurly-burly go and think alone of "business." Honor, patriotism, humanity, sacred obligation—these are nothing. "Business" is the god of our idolatry.

If we did not know just where this clamor comes from, by what influence it is inspired, and for what purpose it is raised, we might for a moment entertain the humiliating fear that the American people were becoming unmanly and effete. We might begin to wonder whether or not some considerable public sentiment could be ready to exchange the nation's dignity for gold. We are sure, however, that it is only the loud cry of the sordid few against the method and the patriotism of the silent but it is menous multitude. We are sure that a country will never countenance the subordination of its honor to "business." We are sure

that the administration or the congress attempting such an infamy would go down to history in disgrace and execration. The American people want no commercial expansion that does not go hand in hand with the fame and glory of their country. They want no audience purchased with their self-respect.

NOT A FAIR DEAL.

From the Troy Times. Judging from what has been said upon the subject by the dominion press, it is evidently the Canadian notion that reciprocity between the two countries shall be some such agreement as this: Canada shall permit American manufacturers to enter their goods at Canadian ports at a reduced rate of duty, and in return Canadian farmers shall have the privilege of sending their produce to the United States without paying the full duty. In other words, the Canadians are willing to match their agricultural against our manufacturing interests, and they are all the more anxious to do this because their manufacturing industries amount to comparatively little and with them agriculture is of the first importance. While such a scheme may appear perfectly feasible and practicable to Mr. Laurier and his supporters, it would fall to resolve endorsement upon this side of the question. To discriminate against the American farmer and in favor of the American manufacturer would be entirely contrary to the protective principles enunciated by the Republican party, and that party cannot afford to violate these principles. Protection is for all; it is not for one class of industries as against another. Furthermore, the admission of Canadian hay, wool, barley, eggs, potatoes and other agricultural products at a lower rate than that specified under the existing law would mean ruin to American farmers and especially to those living in the border states. Even as it is, the Canadian produce is not sold in our markets, and it would be neither just nor politic to increase the privileges which the agriculturists of the dominion enjoy in our markets. The Canadians must arrange some other basis for reciprocity if they desire to secure the establishment of such a system.

"BOSSISM."

From the Troy Times. It is no indictment of a cause that it consents to leadership. It will be a futile party that is not unified by a central direction. The capacity of a leader is determined by the success of his followers. Loyalty to the standard gathers about him who can hear it highest and farthest and does not seize the staff and march away. The most cherished and earnestly desired of the people is a centralized discipline to an army. A double-headed party, like a double-headed man, is unstable in all its ways. The major mistakes of the past have been the result of a divided direction which is perhaps more vital to his party's success than necessary for his personal advancement. The tongue of detraction begins to wag. Envy is the business of weak natures, and a bitter tongue is often the companion of an ill-balanced mind. But the public ear, which has many times been lulled by the political puffing of the people's benefactors, finally tires of the epithets, and the public eye discerns that the so-called "boss," the man who has taken time and experience to represent the people's benefactors, has been doing the people's work and deserving the popular praise.

THE MANLY VIEW.

From the Philadelphia Press. It is the fashion of the American people to fight their political battles with vigor and accept the result with good will. Mr. Penrose as a candidate was antagonized by those who favored another. Mr. Penrose is a senator, and his representative of his party and the state. He will carry to the senate the best wishes for his honorable and successful discharge of his great trust. He goes with many advantages and a great opportunity. He has youth, vigor, ambition and undoubted taste and talent for a parliamentary career. It is to be hoped that it will be all that his best friends could wish.

THE SCOLD.

It's scold! scold! scold! When the morning skies are gray; And it's scold! scold! scold! To the last dim blink of day. And the hard names fly around "Traitor" and "liar" and "cheat," The air is blue and the moon is red With the riot on Exchange street. It's scold! scold! scold! At school-house and church and hall, It's scold! scold! scold! At good and bad and all. The play is "rotten" and dull. The preacher is prosy and cold; The boy has to be very fall, And the bird, not the bottle, is old.

It's scold! scold! scold! At everything that wins: It's scold! scold! scold! Success is the worst of sins; And leaders all are thieves. And parties are frauds and snares, And the scold goes on as the wind goes by. And there's never a soul that cares. —Buffalo News.

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